

Washington, DC -- Congressman Vern Buchanan (FL-13) called today for a national energy policy that invests in alternative fuel and makes us less dependent on foreign oil. During a visit to an alternative fuel automobile plant in Sarasota, Buchanan called for a bipartisan effort to meet the nation's need for affordable energy.

"For too long the Democrats and Republicans in Congress have ignored this issue at the expense of middle-class Americans, who are now paying \$4 for a gallon of gasoline," said Buchanan. "Both parties in Congress need to wake up, work together and take action to make our country more energy independent."

Buchanan also said the big oil companies need to do their part and stop expecting handouts from Washington when working families are suffering. "I took on Big Oil by voting to crack down on price gouging at the pump and eliminate billions in unnecessary subsidies for the oil industry," the congressman noted.

Buchanan said Congress should look at new ways to promote conservation, invest in research and development and develop new sources of energy, including nuclear power and tapping domestic oil in remote parts of Alaska.

In December, Buchanan voted for legislation that increased CAFÉ standards from 27 mpg to 35 mpg by the year 2020 – the first such change in 35 years. The bill also included a 40 percent increase in research and development of clean, domestic and renewable fuels like solar and wind power as well as alternative fuels as ethanol and bio-diesel.

The Congressman said he would strongly oppose any attempt to raise the federal gas tax, as suggested by Congressman John Dingell (D-MI), who proposed raising the tax by 50-cents a gallon to discourage consumption.